

## Claims

1. A backpack, comprising:  
a backpack body, said backpack body defining at least one storage  
5 compartment, said backpack body having a back-facing face, said back-  
facing face having at least one air channel defined thereon, wherein said at  
least one air channel has at least one opening at the periphery of said back-  
facing face; and  
at least one shoulder strap connected to said backpack body,  
10 wherein said at least one shoulder strap is adapted for mounting said  
backpack on a wearer.
2. A backpack as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one air  
channel extends generally vertically from the top of said back-facing face.  
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3. A backpack as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of said at least one air  
channel is positioned to face the spine of a wearer when in use, and is  
sufficiently deep so as to avoid contact with the spine of said wearer when in  
use.  
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4. A backpack as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one air  
channel extends generally horizontally between two sides of said back-  
facing face.
- 25 5. A backpack as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one air  
channel has a plurality of openings, wherein said plurality of openings are in  
fluid communication with ambient air.
6. A backpack as claimed in claim 1, wherein said at least one air  
30 channel includes a first channel extending generally vertically from the top of  
said back-facing face and a second channel extending generally horizontally  
between two side edges of said back-facing face.

7. A backpack as claimed in claim 6, where in said first channel and said second channel are in fluid communication with each other.

8. A backpack, comprising:

5 a backpack body, said backpack body defining at least one storage compartment, said backpack body having a back-facing face, said back-facing face having at least one air channel defined thereon, wherein said at least one air channel is fluidly connected to ambient air when said backpack is worn by a wearer; and

10 at least one shoulder strap connected to said backpack body, wherein said at least one shoulder strap is adapted for mounting said backpack on a wearer.

9. A backpack, comprising:

15 a backpack body, said backpack body defining at least one storage compartment, said backpack body having a back-facing face, said back-facing face having a channel defined thereon, wherein said channel is positioned to face the spine of a wearer when in use, and is sufficiently deep so as to avoid contact with the spine of said wearer when in use; and

20 at least one shoulder strap connected to said backpack body, wherein said at least one shoulder strap is adapted for mounting said backpack on a wearer.

10. A backpack, comprising:

25 a backpack body, said backpack body defining at least one storage compartment, said backpack body having a back-facing face;

at least one shoulder strap connected to said backpack body, wherein said at least one shoulder strap is adapted for mounting said backpack on a wearer; and

30 at least one cushion on said back-facing face, wherein said cushion is compliant so that when said backpack contains a load and is worn by said wearer, said cushion distributes at least a portion of the weight of said load over a portion of the back of said wearer.

11. A backpack as claimed in claim 10, wherein said back-facing face has a bottom and said at least one cushion is positioned proximate said bottom and is positioned to engage the lumbar region of the back of said  
5 wearer.

12. A backpack as claimed in claim 10, wherein said at least one cushion includes two cushions and wherein said cushions are positioned to engage the shoulder blades of said wearer.

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13. A backpack as claimed in claim 12, wherein said two cushions define a channel therebetween, said channel extending generally vertically along a region of said back-facing face facing the spine of a wearer when in use, so that the spine of said wearer is substantially free of contact with said  
15 backpack.

14. A backpack as claimed in claim 10, wherein said at least one cushion includes a first cushion, a second cushion and a third cushion, wherein said first cushion is positioned proximate the bottom of said back-facing face and  
20 is positioned to engage the lumbar region of the back of said wearer when in use, and wherein said second and third cushions are positioned along regions of said back-facing face that face the shoulder blades of said wearer when in use.

25 15. A backpack as claimed in claim 10, wherein said at least one cushion is positioned such that said at least one cushion is the only portion of said backpack body that contacts the back of said wearer.

16. A backpack as claimed in claim 10, wherein said at least one cushion  
30 has an open mesh covering thereon and is of sufficient porosity to permit the flow of air to a portion of the back of said wearer that is covered by said at least one cushion.

17. A backpack, comprising:

a backpack body, said backpack body having a back-facing face, said backpack body defining at least one storage compartment having a bottom, wherein a bottom board is positioned at said bottom, wherein said  
5 bottom board is at least semi-rigid, wherein said bottom board is angled upwards in a direction away from said back-facing face, wherein said backpack is configured to maintain said bottom board generally in said direction when said backpack contains a load therein; and

at least one shoulder strap connected to said backpack body,  
10 wherein said at least one shoulder strap is adapted for mounting said backpack on a wearer.

18. A backpack as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a back board positioned on said back-facing face, wherein said back board is at least  
15 semi-rigid.

19. A backpack as claimed in claim 17, further comprising a plurality of cushions positioned on said back-facing face, wherein said plurality of cushions are positioned on all regions of said back-facing face that contact  
20 the back of said wearer when in use.

20. A backpack as claimed in claim 17, wherein said backpack body has an away-facing face generally opposed to said back-facing face, and the backpack further comprises at least one cinch strap connected to said  
25 backpack body for cinching said away-facing face and said back-facing face towards each other.